

3 exchanging information between a central controller and a player located
4 remotely from the central controller, the information (i) being exchanged while the player
5 plays a game in the tournament and (ii) influencing game play; and
6 storing in a database player information generated as the player participates in the
7 tournament, the stored player information being available for use in a subsequent
8 tournament.

B 1
1 ~~3~~ 106. The method of claim ~~105~~, further comprising:
2 arranging for the player to provide an entry fee in exchange for participating in
3 the tournament.

Cont.
1 ~~3~~ 107. The method of claim ~~106~~, wherein the entry fee comprises a subscription to
2 a plurality of tournaments.

1 ~~4~~ 108. The method of claim ~~106~~, wherein said arranging comprises receiving a
2 payment identifier associated with the player.

1 ~~5~~ 109. The method of claim ~~106~~, wherein the entry fee is based on a period of time
2 the player spends playing the game.

1 ~~6~~ 110. The method of claim ~~106~~, further comprising:
2 awarding to the player a prize.

1 ~~111.~~ The method of claim ~~110~~, wherein said awarding is based on a performance
2 of the player in the tournament.

1 ~~112.~~ The method of claim ~~110~~, wherein the player is a member of a team of
2 players and said awarding is based on a performance of the team in the tournament.

1 ~~113.~~ The method of claim ~~110~~, wherein the prize is based on a number of players
2 in the tournament.

1 ~~114.~~ The method of claim ~~105~~, further comprising:
2 adjusting a difficulty of the game play based on the player information.

1 ~~115.~~ An apparatus for conducting a distributed electronic tournament for a
2 plurality of players, comprising:
3 means for exchanging information between a central controller and a player
4 located remotely from the central controller, the information (i) being exchanged while
5 the player plays a game in the tournament and (ii) influencing game play; and
6 means for storing in a database player information generated as the player
7 participates in the tournament, the stored player information being available for use in a
8 subsequent tournament.

1 116. An apparatus for conducting a distributed electronic tournament for a
2 plurality of players, comprising:
3 a processor; and
4 a storage device coupled to said processor and storing instructions adapted to be
5 executed by said processor to perform the method of claim 105.

1 117. A medium storing instructions adapted to be executed by a processor to
2 perform the method of claim 105.

1 118. A method of conducting a distributed electronic tournament for a plurality
2 of players, comprising:
3 receiving information at a central controller, the information (i) being received
4 from a player through a player output device having a secure memory and (ii) ^{influencing play of the} relating to
5 a game in the tournament played by the player; and
6 storing in a database player information generated as the player participates in the
7 tournament, the stored player information being available for use in a subsequent
8 tournament.

1 119. A method of conducting a distributed electronic tournament for a plurality
2 of players, comprising:
3 receiving information at a central controller, the information ^{influencing play of the} relating to a game in
4 the tournament played by a player, wherein the game relates to at least one of (i) a
5 recently concluded event and (ii) an on-going event; and

6 storing in a database player information generated as the player participates in the
7 tournament, the stored player information being available for use in a subsequent
8 tournament.

1 *16* 120. The method of claim *119*, wherein the event comprises a broadcast event. *15*

1 *17* 121. A method of conducting a distributed electronic tournament for a plurality
2 of players, comprising:

3 arranging for a player to participate in the tournament, said arranging limiting a
4 total number of players in the tournament to a predetermined number; and
5 receiving information at a central controller, the information *influencing play of the* game in
6 the tournament played by the player. *1* *1*

1 *18* 122. A method of conducting a distributed electronic tournament for a plurality
2 of players, comprising:

3 arranging for a player to participate in the tournament, said arranging being
4 performed based on player information retrieved from a database, the player information
5 being associated with a qualifying event; and
6 receiving information at a central controller, the information *influencing play of the* game in
7 the tournament played by the player. *1*

1 *19* 123. A method of conducting distributed electronic tournaments, comprising:
2 receiving payment information from *the* player; *1* *2*

3 arranging for the player to provide an entry fee, using the payment information, in
4 exchange for participating in a first tournament;
5 storing the payment information; and
6 retrieving the payment information to arrange for the player to provide a second
7 entry fee, using the payment information, in exchange for participating in a second
8 tournament.

124
1 124. A method of conducting a distributed electronic tournament, comprising:
2 storing in a database player information generated as a player participates in the
3 tournament; and
4 adjusting a difficulty level of the tournament, based on the stored player
5 information, as the tournament is played.

125
1 125. A method of conducting a distributed electronic tournament, the tournament
2 having a number of positions, comprising:
3 reserving a predetermined number of positions for a selected group of players
4 until the starting time of the tournament is a preset time away; and
5 making the reserved positions available to players not in the selected group when
6 the starting time of the tournament is a preset time away.

REMARKS

Claims 1-104 have been canceled without prejudice. Claims 105-125 have been added. Applicants respectfully request allowance of the pending claims.

If the Examiner has any suggestions for expediting allowance of the present application, the Examiner is kindly invited to contact Patrick Buckley at telephone